

NATIONAL PHILOPTOCHOS

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

2016 – 2018 SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS: EFTHALIA KATOS & STELLA PANTELIDIS
 NATIONAL BOARD LIAISON: EVANGELINE MEKRAS SCURTIS
 SOCIAL WORK SERVICES DELIVERED BY: PAULETTE GEANACOPOULOS, LMSW

OVERVIEW OF SERVICES • JANUARY 1, 2017 - DECEMBER 8, 2017

NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED THIS PERIOD: 140

<u>CASES BY METROPOLIS:</u>	140	<u>AGE OF CLIENTS:</u>	140
ATLANTA	14	0 - 10	06
BOSTON	04	11 - 20	04
CHICAGO	05	21 - 30	11
DAD	59	31 - 40	17
DENVER	04	41 - 50	23
DETROIT	01	51 - 60	30
NEW JERSEY	24	61 - 70	20
PITTSBURGH.....	06	71 - 80	15
SAN FRANCISCO	17	81 - 90	08
GREECE / OTHER.....	06	91 - 99	05
		N/A	01

PRESENTING PROBLEM (Initial Reason for Seeking Our Help): **140**

Cancer / Other Major Medical	36
Funeral / Burial Arrangements	24
Homeless/ Housing	23
Poverty/Income Inadequacy / Assist with Benefits	15
Mental Illness	14
Aging / LTC / Homecare/ Alzheimer's	07
Substance Use Disorder	06
Autism	05
Domestic Violence	05
Other (Transp, Car Repair, Immigration, Tuition)	05

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS:

TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED THIS PERIOD	\$133,614.44
TOTAL # GRANTS	44
# DIFFERENT CLIENTS RECEIVING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	33

<u>FUNDS UTILIZED THIS PERIOD</u>	44 GRANTS	\$133,614.44
CANCER/ OTHER MAJOR MEDICAL	13.....	43,146.91
SOCIAL SERVICES	16.....	42,996.47
AUTISM	09.....	30,262.40
GENERAL MEDICAL	05.....	12,700.00
CHILDREN'S MEDICAL FUND.....	01.....	4,508.66

<u>GRANTS BY METROPOLIS:</u>	\$133,614.44
ATLANTA / 11 GRANTS.....	25,622.55
BOSTON / 3 GRANTS	12,942.28
CHICAGO / 2 GRANTS	10,970.00
DAD /14 GRANTS	33,705.25
DETROIT / 1 GRANT	7,439.31
NEW JERSEY / 5 GRANTS.....	17,296.42
PITTSBURGH / 7 GRANTS	21,295.00
SAN FRANCISCO / 2 GRANTS	4,343.63

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FRAMEWORK FOR OUR SERVICES

THE SECRET SHAME OF MIDDLE-CLASS AMERICANS <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/05/my-secret-shame/476415/>

"We planned. We did everything right. We were frugal and lived within our means. My husband worked every hour he was allowed. We saved, paid cash or went without. And then he got cancer, the Rolls Royce of diseases. He died, and the medical bills wiped me out. This was not in the plan. Yes, some people made their own mess, made some bad choices, but not all of us. Some things are beyond our control. What happened to me could happen to any of you - how would you fare?"

Nextavenue.org Since 2013, the Federal Reserve Board has conducted a survey to "monitor the financial and economic status of American consumers." While most of the data in the latest survey are less than earth-shattering, i.e. 49 percent of part-time workers would prefer to work more hours at their current wage, **the answer to one question was astonishing. The Fed asked respondents how they would pay for a \$400 emergency. The answer? 47 percent of respondents said that either they would cover the expense by borrowing or selling something, or they would not be able to come up with the \$400 at all. Four hundred dollars! Who knew?**

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES www.philoptochos.org/socialservices

Since 1987, National Philoptochos has provided social work services to Orthodox Christians in the United States, regardless their immigration status, who are experiencing a myriad of human service and financial challenges including poverty, hunger and homelessness, mental illness, substance use disorders, domestic violence, autism spectrum disorders, life-threatening illnesses, physical impairments and more. Clients are asked to complete our **Application for Assistance** and **Consent for Release of Information** forms and must comply with our policies and procedures. With confidential, evidence-based services provided by a New York State licensed social worker, members of our community are helped to address and resolve, as best as possible, the problems they face in a manner that strives to empower them to manage on their own moving forward. In less than 30% of our cases, limited financial help may be provided.

BEYOND DIRECT SERVICES:

Along with direct services, the social worker develops culturally appropriate user-friendly educational materials, bi-lingual fact sheets, and presentations to inform our community about the issues at hand and to propose actions that we, as a faith-based community can take to ensure we respond in helpful, not hurtful ways. One such document is the **"Guide to Finding Local Programs and Services"** that helps our chapters and members find and access programs and services regardless where they are in the United States, such as:

- Alcohol / Substance Abuse – adults, adolescents, family members, co-dependency, 12-Step Groups and more.
- Mental Health –treatment resources; suicide prevention and more. (About 40% of our clients suffer from some form of mental illness).
- Older Adult Services and Programs – nationwide eldercare locator, confidential online public/private benefits screening tool
- Resources for Cancer Patients (Lodging, Financial, Support Services, Philoptochos Fact Sheets)
- Information and Referrals for Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Domestic Violence –Philoptochos and other resources to help identify and address intimate partner abuse among adults, teens and college age students, sexual assaults, hotlines / helplines. Philoptochos materials highlight responses by the Orthodox Christian community.
- Protective Services for adults, senior citizens, children, and persons in long term care institutions and facilities
- Homelessness, Hunger, Food Insecurity – includes interactive state-by-state guide to food pantries. (A large percentage of women, many with children, are homeless after leaving an abusive relationship.)
- Burial Benefits for American Veterans
- Personal Financial Management / Budgeting – nationwide non-profit referrals

METROPOLIS SOCIAL SERVICES LIAISONS:

At our recommendation, several Metropolis Presidents have designated members from their Metropolis Boards as social services liaisons to guide their chapters and help us when we need "boots on the ground" details not obtainable by phone or in writing. With the Metropolis Presidents, these women ensure our collaborations effectively serve our clients. With many thanks to our "eyes and ears", we recognize: **GEORGEANN PAPADAKOS**, Archdiocesan District; **MARTHA (MARTY) DRISCOLL & PRESVYTERA EVI KAPLANIS**, Atlanta; **GEORGIA LAGADINOS**, Boston; **HELEN THEODOSAKIS**, Chicago; **ELENI CONSTANTINIDES**, New Jersey; and **LISA XANTHOS**, San Francisco.

NEW 2018 SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAM - TELEPHONE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP:

A telephone cancer support group for **Orthodox Christians, 21+**, who are undergoing cancer treatment is being initiated by the Department of Social Services. **The discussion group will "meet" on the telephone via conference call and at no cost to participants**, and will be **accessible nationwide** to members of our community on six consecutive Thursday evenings from January 11 - February 15, 2018, 7:00pm - 8:00pm, EST. The group will be facilitated by **Theodora Ziongias, M.A.**, who has a strong background in cancer patient services through positions she has held at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, the American Cancer Society and CancerCare. Evidence-based studies have demonstrated that support groups improve patients' survival outcomes, help them feel better and more hopeful, and give people facing similar experiences the opportunity to connect and share their innermost thoughts and feelings in a **confidential, safe, supportive and non-judgmental setting**. Discussions will include when and how to reveal diagnosis and treatment information to family, friends, employers and others; effectively communicating with medical personnel; mechanisms for coping; adjusting to a new image of self and body, and more. While many organizations sponsor cancer support groups, ours will stand apart by addressing our community's unique cultural issues that can be barriers to accessing mainstream services, and enabling participants to examine their spirituality and faith-based concerns in the face of a potentially life-threatening illness.

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. Persons interested in joining the group can pre-register by emailing supportgroup@philoptochos.org. To maintain confidentiality - a foundation for all of our social services - this email address is designated solely for this program.

For more information about the support group or Philoptochos Social Services, please contact Paulette Geanacopoulos, LMSW, Director, National Philoptochos' Department of Social Services at PauletteG@philoptochos.org, or by calling the confidential social work telephone at (212) 977-7782. Details about our procedures and downloadable fact sheets can be found at www.philoptochos.org/socialservices.